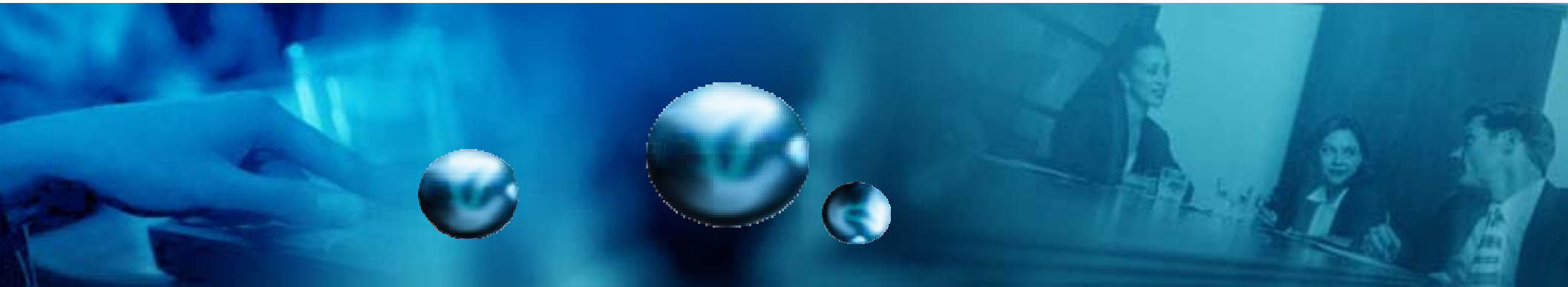


# Fostering Parental Involvement During the Preschool and Early Elementary Years



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# Benefits of Parent Involvement

- What parents DO is more important than who they ARE
- Impact regardless of:
  - Socioeconomic Status (SES)
  - Education background
  - Reading proficiency



# Impact of Parent Involvement

- The most effective forms of parent involvement are those, which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home.
- Family participation in education was *twice* as predictive of academic success as family SES.
- The more intensely parents are involved, the more beneficial the effects.
- The more parents participate, in a sustained way, at every level, the better the impact.
  - Advocacy
  - Home teachers
  - Decision-makers
  - Volunteers/paraprofessionals



# Parent Involvement Model

Community Impact model by Ira Gordon (1979) includes six roles for parents:

- Parents as Teachers
- Parents as Volunteers
- Parents as Paraprofessionals
- Parents as Adult Learners
- Parents as Adult Educators
- Parents as Decision-Makers



# Framework for Parent Involvement

Cervone and O'Leary (1982) propose four forms of parent activity:

- Reporting progress (exchange of information)
- Special events
- Parent education
- Parent teaching in school and at home



# The Home Connection with Parents

Moles (1982) identified key program characteristics related to parent involvement:

- Educational resources/strategies to assist parents in helping their children at home.
- Parent education, referral, and support services to help parents improve their children's learning.
- Channels for communication.
- Opportunities for parent-teacher contact to improve student success.



# Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement

Important types of cooperation between families, schools, and other community organizations.

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning at Home
- Decision-making
- Collaboration with the Community



# Contributing Family Characteristics

Families whose children succeed in school and in life exhibit the following:

- Establish a daily family routine.
- Monitor out-of-school activities.
- Model the value of learning, self-discipline, and hard work.
- Express high but realistic expectations for achievement.
- Encourage children's development/progress in school.
- Encourage reading, writing, and discussions among family members.



# Engaging Meaningful Parent Involvement in Programs

- Two main global barriers: lack of planning and lack of mutual understanding.
- Program staff need to be both open-minded and well-organized in their approach with parents.
- Most successful parent participation efforts are those which offer parents a variety of roles in the program based on parents' different schedules, preferences, and capabilities.



# General Guidelines to Foster Parent Involvement

- Communicate the importance of involvement and that it makes a difference
- Encourage parent involvement from the start
- Parents modeling behavior
- Provide orientation and training for parents
- Special emphasis on parents of disadvantaged students
- Continually emphasize parents as partners



# Example Activities to Engage Parents

- Volunteer opportunities
- Positive phone calls by staff
- Parent Handbook
- Team meeting with parents
- Newsletters
- Advisory Groups
- Lending libraries
- Family Nights/Events
- Take-Home Activity Kits
- New Family Orientation Sessions
- Transition meetings



# Resources

- MDE Parents & Family Web Site  
<http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-5233---,00.html>
- Parent Involvement – Get the Facts on Why it's important!  
[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Final\\_Parent\\_Involvement\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_14732\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Final_Parent_Involvement_Fact_Sheet_14732_7.pdf)
- Head Start  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Family%20and%20Community%20Partnerships>
- Positive Behavior Supports  
[www.bpis.org](http://www.bpis.org)